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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 08 USOSCE 000183

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 08/06/2015

TAGS: [KCFE](#) [OSCE](#) [PARM](#) [PREL](#) [RS](#) [XG](#)

SUBJECT: OSCE'S FSC, END OF WINTER/SPRING ROUND: SHARP  
EXCHANGES, SOME BREAKTHROUGHS

REF: A. STATE 07498

[1](#)B. USOSCE 00095

[1](#)C. USOSCE 00181

Classified By: Charge d'Affaires Hugh Neighbour, Reason 1.4B/D

[1](#)1. (C) Summary: During the winter/spring round of the OSCE's Forum for Security Cooperation (FSC), the viability of Vienna Document 1999 (VD99), the August 2008 conflict in Georgia, and reflection on Russia's European Security Treaty proposal pitted Russia against a majority of states. There were frequent, sharp exchanges between Russia and Georgia and others. Russia criticized the viability of VD99 and pushed for a limited revision while others, led by the U.S., called for greater political will in fully implementing existing measures and commitments.

[1](#)2. (SBU) In a more cooperative vein, other significant activity included the first FSC workshop on cyber security in March; progress on the U.S.-authored first chapter of the 1540 Best Practice Guide (BPG) which looks set for adoption in September--with full Russian backing--after two years of negotiations; adoption of a new Code of Conduct (CoC) questionnaire, also after two years of effort; and agreement by all to hold a conference in September 2009 to review the OSCE Document on Small Arms and Light weapons (SALW). Mission also coordinated U.S. support for a U.S.-UK led project that helped Cyprus destroy 324 excess SA-7 MANPADs in June. All USG priorities and objectives (Ref A) were met or exceeded during the winter/spring round.

[1](#)3. (C) Compromise proposals for a limited update of VD99, the SALW review conference, and preparation for the OSCE Ministerial in Athens are expected to feature prominently during the fall round. Besides these topics, Mission expects UNSCR 1540, cyber security, and tabled improvements for VD99 implementation to also remain at the forefront in the FSC. Meanwhile, results from the informal OSCE Ministerial in Corfu or "Corfu Process" reinforced the prospects for prolonged dialogue on European security in at least two joint

FSC-PC sessions, and have FSC delegations gearing up to support their COMs on this topic. Washington guidance for the fall round is welcomed in paras 9, 20, 28, and 30-35. End Summary.

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A "Dead Letter" vs. Political Will  
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¶4. (SBU) Throughout the winter and spring Russia continued to argue for a revision of Vienna Document 1999 (VD99) that would incorporate its proposals for CSBMs on naval and rapid reaction forces. Russia criticized the viability of the "dead letter" at every opportunity, repeatedly linking the failure of the OSCE to prevent the August 2008 conflict in Georgia to VD99's outdated and dysfunctional measures. Two months into the session Russia circulated a detailed critique of VD99 for use at the 2009 Annual Implementation Assessment Meeting (AIAM). In its assessment, Russia concluded that 50 percent of VD99 is non-functional and the remainder is functioning at only partial capacity. By May, Russia softened its tone and called for a "modest, limited revision" of the document following a consensus-based approach and targeting pre-agreed, specific measures.

¶5. (SBU) In addition to revising VD99, Russia resurrected its proposals for naval and rapid reaction force CSBMs and a single deadline for submission of defense planning data. While all three proposals featured prominently in Russia's

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interventions during the March AIAM, Russia requested to have its proposal for naval measures placed on the weekly working group B agenda. Meanwhile, Russia's pitch for a single deadline for submission of defense planning data became more nuanced, arguing that a single deadline would allow the CPC to engage the OSCE's 56 participating States (pS) who are late in submitting their annual data, something that the CPC currently does not have the remit to do.

¶6. (SBU) Countering Russian criticism of VD99, some delegations, including the U.S., urged pS to demonstrate greater political will by fully implementing existing CSBMs, as well as the CFE Treaty. A large majority of pS also questioned the utility or necessity of creating a naval CSBM and called on Russia to identify what specific security concerns such a CSBM would address. The proposals to adopt a single date for submission of Defense planning data, while falling well short of gaining traction, fared somewhat better and drew supportive comments from some pS, including Germany.

¶7. (SBU) With the exception of a joint UK-Russian proposal on a best practice guide for VD99 Chapter IV contacts, progress on new CSBMs including improvements to existing CSBMs virtually stalled. USDel expected up to five pre-coordinated Allied proposals to be tabled in the AIAM and/or FSC. However, Norwegian and Danish proposals, while presented at the AIAM, were never forwarded to the FSC for action. Turkey tabled a proposal for more liberal rules for use of digital cameras and GPS equipment, and Germany tabled a proposal for standards for briefings by military commanders; but, at the end of round both proposals faced serious opposition.

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Stagnation: Feeling Something Must Give  
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¶8. (C) The reason for this stagnation seems to be threefold. First, Russia indicated that as a matter of principle it would not support proposals for voluntary measures to improve implementation. In fact, Russia all but killed Germany's proposal on "guidelines for briefings by military commanders..." by proposing towards the end of the session

such substantial edits to the text that Germany was at a loss on how to move forward. Second, some pS, including Germany, have said that, taking Russia at its word, they will not support proposals that Russia is sure to oppose. According to Denmark and Norway, this is in part why they never tabled their AIAM proposals in the FSC. Finally, several Allies remain convinced that agreeing to a mandatory decision for improving VD99 implementation is tantamount to "opening" the document for revision. According to the UK, its position on not opening VD99 also played a role in stalling Danish and Norwegian proposals.

¶9. (C) Comment: As a consequence, there appears to be a feeling among many pS in Vienna that something will have to give. Not surprisingly, Russia has tacit backing by Belarus and Kazakhstan for limited revision of VD99. Many Allies and others have noted on the margins that they would be open to discussions, while other Allies have informally approached USDel seeking consultation on possible formulas for breaking the logjam. While an indication of U.S. willingness to consider a limited package of revisions to the VD99 after 10 years would be received warmly, such a step would first have to be carefully weighed at senior levels (see also Ref B). End comment.

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The August 2008 Conflict Lives On  
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¶10. (SBU) The August 2008 conflict between Russia and Georgia remained a focal topic for planned and unplanned discussion during the winter/spring round. In February, the head of the European Union Monitoring Mission and CPC Director argued their case to a Joint FSC-PC session for pS continued support for international monitors in Georgia with full access to the South Ossetia and Abkhazia regions. In another joint session in June, the OSCE, EU, and UN Co-Chairs of the Geneva talks on Georgia addressed pS following the closure of UNOMIG and the OSCE Mission to Georgia.

¶11. (SBU) Impromptu, direct exchanges between Russia and Georgia flared repeatedly during the winter session. Repetitive exchanges over the conflict's causes and consequences were fueled with periodic news of new complications, such as Georgia's decision to reject a Russian VD99 inspection in February on the basis of force majeure, and repeated incidents along the zone of conflict including, inter alia, the temporary detention of OSCE MMOs by South Ossetian Militia in February, an unannounced Russian live-fire exercise along the zone in March, repeated shootings, and the final closure of the OSCE Military Monitoring Mission. Direct exchanges subsided in the spring session owing in part to the fact that, as acting FSC Chair, Georgia steered away from open confrontation, a point noted by Russia at the end of round. Nevertheless, Russia used the last meeting of the round to enumerate its lessons learned from August 2008, with Georgia reserving its national right to reply during the next session after the UK assumed the Chairmanship.

¶12. (SBU) Throughout the round, Russia's message remained consistent. Georgian President Sakashvili bore full responsibility for the conflict, a line which was reinforced by Russian Foreign Minister Lavrov at the June Annual Security Review Conference (ASRC). Russia decried third party transfers of armaments to Georgia before and after the conflict, alleging that pS providing arms to Georgia contravened a number of OSCE norms and principles and created "one of the most militarized states in the world." Russia underscored its position by calling for an embargo of offensive arms transfers to Georgia.

¶13. (C) All pS regretted the frequent sharp exchanges in open

forum. Georgia was privately criticized by many pS for its sharp comments, and no pS supported Georgia's decision to declare force majeure in response to a Russian VD99 inspection request. Russia's rhetoric, however, often turned prevailing pS attitudes against it, and Russia found itself isolated on arms transfers, the independence of Georgian occupied territories, and the closure of the monitoring mission.

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European Security Debate Leads to...  
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¶14. (SBU) During the winter/spring round pS sought clarification from Russia on President Medvedev's "European Security Treaty" proposal and, at the same time, attempted to broaden the focus to include all three dimensions. Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Grushko addressed a Joint PC-FSC session in February in an attempt to answer pS questions and promote Russia's vision of European Security. Grushko cited Kosovo, Georgia, and NATO centrism as examples of "new

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realities" that drive Russian motivation for a new, legally binding instrument to affirm agreed principles. Most pS found Grushko's comments less than enlightening.

¶15. (SBU) At the OSCE's Annual Security Review Conference (ASRC) on June 23, Russian FM Lavrov ploughed familiar ground on the rationale and outline of Russian proposals to strengthen European security architecture. He argued there were three factors contributing to impaired security: lack of trust between governments, risks of internal ruptures, and the inability of the international community to respond. Lavrov urged participating States to recommit to non-interference in internal affairs of other countries, renounce the use of force to settle conflicts, adhere to international mechanisms for regulating conflict and provide support for international organizations dedicated to preventing conflict. He said a new security architecture would have four major building blocks: interstate relations, arms control, conflict management, and new threats.

¶16. (SBU) The responses from pS to both presentations were familiar. All reaffirmed their commitment to the principles of the Helsinki Final Act. Many pS found Russia's credibility lacking, considering its suspension of CFE obligations. Other delegations, citing the August conflict in Georgia specifically, called for greater political will in solving frozen conflicts and urged Russia to agree to re-establish an OSCE and UN presence in the disputed territories.

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...The "Corfu Process"  
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¶17. (SBU) As the round closed, a series of events outside the FSC (the Berlin seminar on the future of arms control in Europe, the OSCE informal ministerial in Corfu, and U.S.-Russian bilateral Summit) provided delegations with a sense of anticipation for reinvigorated discussions in the fall. In particular, the advent of the Corfu process in June, which includes an "assessment of current situation in each of the three dimensions in order to develop a common understanding of...priority common threats," has many delegations speculating that the FSC will play a contributing role in preparation for the Athens Ministerial in December. The Greek CiO has already begun to outline plans to discuss all three OSCE dimensions in the fall. According to the CiO, FSC dels will be asked to support perm reps with an assessment of the pol-mil dimension.

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118. (SBU) March 17-18 the FSC held the first FSC workshop on Cyber security with more than 200 civil and military representatives gathered in Vienna. This was one of the more broadly attended workshops held under the auspices of the OSCE, with reps in attendance from Egypt, Japan, the Arab League, and NATO, among others. Their key aim was to identify ways to cooperate on enhancing cyber security and examine the potential future role of the OSCE in addressing this global problem.

119. (C) Initially considered by the U.S. a risky topic for the FSC, the workshop proved a successful endeavor for achieving U.S. objectives, which were to prevent the militarization of cyber security, refrain from engaging in discussions on constraining state capabilities, and keeping

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the focus on defensive remedies to ensure cyber security. USDel assessed that a new CSBM introduced by the U.S. and close Allies on cyber security may be in U.S. interest if the U.S. wishes to take a proactive stance in the OSCE.

120. (C) Comment: A presentation on the outcome of the U.S. 60\*day cyber review, even though it was done in the Permanent Council, was well received and appreciated by FSC dels. It was viewed by many pS as the first step after the March workshop in breaking the U.S. silence on cyber security in the OSCE. If the USG wanted to go further, a carefully-considered, new CSBM introduced by the U.S. and close allies on cyber security could be in U.S. interest for three reasons. First, it would advance the U.S. approach on cyber with the 56 participating States of the OSCE, half of whom are not in NATO. Second, it would offer a positive alternative to impractical Russian proposals that would treat cyber security as an arms control issue and thus prevent Russia from defining the debate. Third, it would allow the U.S. to assert leadership in an area that matters to U.S. interests. Such a CSBM could be centered, for instance, around the U.S. recommendations at the workshop (see preceding para) or the G-8's eleven agreed points on cyber security. End comment.

Progress on 1540 BPG, More Work to Do on FFT

121. (SBU) The U.S. sponsored Food for Thought (FFT) paper on a "Further Work on 1540" (FSC.DEL/25/09/Corr.4) gained broad support, including eleven cosponsors. However, opposition from Russia has prevented the FSC from pursuing an overall strategy on 1540 based on the FFT. Russia criticized the overall tone of the paper and attacked some of the paper's specific proposals, finding they "invaded the competency" of the UN 1540 Committee or lacked any "added value." In conversations with the incoming UK Chair, Mission assesses that movement forward on this initiative will likely depend on addressing some or all of Russia's concerns, either through a revision to the Strategy paper--a route the future UK Chair prefers--or by drafting separate Del papers based on the proposals from the FFT. In either case, the UK will likely support moving either option forward this fall. In addition, the UK is still working to obtain extra budgetary funding for a 1540 coordinator.

122. (SBU) 1540 Best Practice Guide (BPG): Despite aforementioned differences over the FFT, after two years of on-off negotiations, Russia and the U.S. did resolve the outstanding issues with the draft first chapter of the 1540 BPG just before the last meeting of the winter/spring FSC session. What should be the final revision was then issued, along with a draft decision that will permit publication. Russia expressed its full support. It is expected that the



first chapter will be adopted soon after the fall session opens in September. Canada circulated its draft chapter (Ch. 3 on physical security) for comment, but it received extensive comments and Canada is reviewing its status.

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Decisions and Projects  
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¶23. (SBU) Code of Conduct: After over two years of negotiation, the FSC adopted a new Code of Conduct (CoC) Questionnaire in April (FSC.DEC/01/09). Participating States also took a decision to postpone 2009 CoC questionnaire

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submissions in anticipation of the new questionnaire's adoption. The first responses to this questionnaire were submitted in June.

¶24. (SBU) SALW: The FSC adopted a decision on the modalities and agenda for a September 22-23 meeting to review the OSCE Document on Small Arms and Light Weapons (FSC.DEC/05/09). The meeting, proposed by the Chair of the Informal Group of Friends of Small Arms and Light Weapons (Germany), is a response to the 2008 Ministerial decision to review the FSC's document on SALW.

¶25. (SBU) HOV: Participating States agreed to hold a Heads of Verification meeting December 14, 2009 in conjunction with the annual exchange of military information (FSC.DEC/04/09).

¶26. (SBU) Turkey and Germany tabled formal proposals on improving VD99 implementation that will remain in WG A for the fall session. Germany's paper on Briefings by Military Commanders (FSC.DD/05/09) has mixed reviews from pS. Germany seemed prepared to address U.S. concerns, but elected not to circulate a new revision after receiving substantial edits (deletions) from Russia late in the session. Based on Russia's edits, Germany is now uncertain whether the document will remain viable. Similarly, Turkey's paper on the use of digital cameras and GPS (FSC.DEL/124/09) has run into opposition from Ukraine and Belarus, which both oppose references to GPS based on national legislation restrictions.

While Belarus has informally proposed compromise language which would make the measure voluntary, it is unclear whether such a change would be acceptable to Russia. Finally, a UK-Russia proposed "Best Practice Guide for Implementation of Chapter IV, Contacts" was redistributed as FSC.AIAM/09/01.Rev1.

¶27. (SBU) Mission coordinated U.S. support for a U.S.-UK led project to assist Cyprus in the destruction of 324 excess SA-7 MANPADs. The project was deemed a success and concluded with a public ceremony on June 12.

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Looking ahead  
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-- Revising (or a limited update of) VD99

¶28. (C) Russia will likely continue its push for a revision to VD99. Building traction will remain difficult for Russia, especially when VD99 is viewed within the larger context of a protracted discussion on European Security. However, should Russia prove uncompromising on voluntary measures to improve VD99 implementation, the U.S. could face a growing call by some pS, including Allies, for a compromise approach that includes limited revision. Denmark, supported by Norway, has already informally circulated to a number of Allies a proposal addressing apprehension over opening VD99. While the proposal was uniformly rejected by the Quad in Vienna, it is unclear whether Denmark will attempt to revive it this fall. At the same time, Germany has indicated to the Quad

that it will soon circulate a non-paper assessing the current state of affairs and proposing a package solution to revision. Germany has also asked Mission for the U.S. response to Russia's call for a limited revision.

-- The Corfu Process and European Security

¶29. (C) Further discussion on European Security, with particular emphasis on the "Corfu Process," is expected to remain a topic of interest in the fall. The CiO has

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indicated that it intends to hold weekly meetings to assess the current state of affairs in the three security dimensions. Three of those meetings will cover the politico-military dimension and one of those is purportedly scheduled as a joint FSC-PC meeting (Ref C). While focal point for discussion will likely remain in the PC, the CiO has called for an assessment of each dimension and expects that FSC delegations will support Perm Reps on the pol-mil aspects of the discussion.

-- 1540 Best Practice Guide (BPG)

¶30. (SBU) It is likely that the U.S.-authored chapter of the 1540 BPG will reach consensus early in the UK's Chairmanship that begins in September. Mission recommends leveraging the positive exposure generated by this accomplishment to entice other delegations to consider authoring the remaining chapters. In this light, Mission requests input as to which delegations may be more receptive to U.S. overtures based on their nation's involvement with 1540 in other forums.

-- Further Work on 1540

¶31. (SBU) Although the U.S. FFT on Further Work on 1540 has gained solid support among pS, it does not seem likely that Russia will back an overall strategy for the FSC without significant changes. Ignoring Russia's concerns risks stalemate, which in turn jeopardizes the support and momentum we have already developed among a number of pS. USDel recommends, therefore, that Washington deemphasize the concept of an overall strategy for the OSCE, and increase efforts to develop one or more of the proposals from the FFT into one or more concrete FSC draft decisions.

-- VD99 Implementation

¶32. (SBU) Working Groups A and B will continue to discuss the Turkish proposal on GPS and digital cameras, Germany's guidelines for presentations by military commanders, UK and Russia's BPG for Chapter IV contacts, and Russia's proposal on naval CSBMs. Mission welcomes additional guidance as required on any of these proposals.

-- SALW Conference

¶33. (SBU) The SALW Review in September will serve as the first significant event on the fall agenda. Mission welcomes Washington's participation and looks forward to a productive event in which, like the cyber security workshop in March, the U.S. takes a proactive role in articulating and educating others on U.S. positions.

-- Cyber Security

¶34. (SBU) Participating States have repeatedly approached USDel following the March Cyber Security workshop and have stated they are waiting to table their own proposals on cyber security for fear of putting the U.S. into an awkward spot. Mission would welcome Washington's views on further cyber security work in the FSC (please see comment para 20).

-- December's OSCE Athens Ministerial

¶35. (SBU) Mission welcomes Washington's input regarding FSC goals and objectives for the OSCE Ministerial in Athens.

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Reporting Cables  
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¶36. (SBU) More details: For further details on FSC plenary meetings over the past six months, here follows a list of post reporting on the January-July Round:

USOSCE 00008, USOSCE 00013, USOSCE 00018, USOSCE 00034,  
USOSCE 00036, USOSCE 00038, USOSCE 00041, USOSCE 00046,  
USOSCE 00049, USOSCE 00050, USOSCE 00055, USOSCE 00064,  
USOSCE 00065, USOSCE 00066, USOSCE 00071, USOSCE 00084,  
USOSCE 00085, USOSCE 00119, USOSCE 00123, USOSCE 00132,  
USOSCE 00134, USOSCE 00138, USOSCE 00139, USOSCE 00145,  
USOSCE 00147, USOSCE 00154, USOSCE 00157, USOSCE 00167,  
USOSCE 00172.

NEIGHBOUR